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Business Plan for a Social Entrepreneurship Initiative

Empowerment as a mean to include older Syrian female refugees into German society

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1. Abstract

While many Syrian refugees have entered Germany within the past two to three years, the pressure on the government to properly include these people into society is omnipresent. Although current efforts conducted by the government cannot be misprized, yet many believe these efforts are insufficient and lack tailor-made solutions. Especially vulnerable groups such as older women need proper programmes to empower them as well as include them into society. In this context, the concept of a social restaurant employing older Syrian refugee women as a tool to tackle these issues is analyzed within the framework of a business plan.

Keywords: *Refugee Crisis, Women's Empowerment, Social Entrepreneurship, Business Plan*

2. Introduction

Beyond doubt, war and poverty are both very present issues within our globalized society that may lead to inequality and eventually cause severe problems. Although governments and scholars are steadily working on coping with these issues, it however seems their efforts are not effective enough. This is reflected by the rising number of refugees emigrating to eventually find peace and prosperity.

Taken the example of Germany, regarded as one of the most prosperous countries within the European Union, an incredible number of refugees (more than 1.5 mln people) within the last two years have entered the country in hope of finding a safe haven after years of war and oppression. Among those, there are older Syrian refugee women, who are in need of receiving suitable integration measures as well as empowerment mechanisms.

Although the German government claims to undertake the necessary resources and efforts to include this vulnerable group of women properly into society, reality often proves the opposite. Hence, the concept of Social Entrepreneurship as a tool to imply market-based methods to solve social problems has recently gained increasing importance and if implied correctly, may benefit all actors involved.

3. Literature Overview

Although the field of Social Entrepreneurship is considered to be a modern and recent movement, yet there already exists considerable amount of academic literature in this field and it nowadays serves as a growing subject of interest within the business world.

Probably the most well-known School of Thoughts connected to traditional Entrepreneurship - and often regarded as their forerunners - (Dees & Anderson, 2006; Bjärsholm, 2017) are the Social Innovation and the Social Enterprise School of Thought, both stemming from the 1980s (Dees & Anderson, 2006).

According to Dees & Anderson (2006) the Social Enterprise School of Thought derived from the „increasing interest among nonprofit organizations in finding new sources of revenue to supplement donor and government funding” (p. 41) and „the desire amongst some business executives to promote the provision of human social services by for-profit companies” (p. 42). Hence, motivations for creating this School of Thought stemmed from increasing interest on the site of non-profit as well as for-profit organizations or individuals, wishing to distinctively support the so called „social industry”. However, by doing this, this School of Thought is rather focused on the generation of „earned-income” to serve a social mission (ibid, p. 41), meaning it is very straight-forward and identifies (social) entrepreneurs rather as individuals indirectly supporting a social cause. It thus mostly refers to entrepreneurs generating income (by operating any business) to eventually subsidize or support a more direct social cause.

In contrast to that thought, the Social Innovation School oppositely focused on finding and creating innovative ways to directly tackle the issues of inequality and social needs. This thought has conceptually derived from the believes of an Austrian economist called Joseph Schumpeter, who regarded social entrepreneurs as individuals who „reform or revolutionize the patterns of producing social value” by „shifting resources into areas of higher yield for society” while operating a business (p. 44).

Although both schools have been vital for the first development of Social Entrepreneurship in the long run, they are outdated in many ways since they both do not address the issue of empowerment, inclusion nor environmental problems.

While looking at more recent findings, the connection towards a more complete Social Entrepreneurship view, which tries to address a considerable amount of needs and issues at the same time, has been developed. Hence, the Social Entrepreneurship view of today is a very dynamic and multifaced view - however - with no definite agreed definition (Sijabat, 2015, p.36). Eikenberg (2009) even argues that Social Entrepreneurship is reflected as a commercialization of non-profit organizations. Thus, modern Entrepreneurship is borderless and

is constantly developing, but as Thompson (2008) argues, there are certain simple requisites to recognize a Social Entrepreneurship initiative such as above all its social purpose, the creation of community benefit and the reinvestment of surpluses to create good (p. 149-161).

In contrast, for a profit-making business nowadays, common measures to define success are for instance certain Key Performance Indicators such as market share, sales volume and more.

Social businesses however, nowadays define success rather on an impact base and to measure this impact, these businesses generally need to identify beforehand how they value and interpret success and how they plan to achieve it (Epstein & Yuthas, 2014, p-3). Hence, a social business might be described successful if it achieves its aims or purposes: It has an identified problem and provides a clear solution. Although impact is most important, financial stability cannot be neglected as within profit businesses as well to be able to sustain itself.

Usually, to be able to execute an initiative or project, it is of help for a prospective entrepreneur – regardless if social or non-social – to bundle existent ideas into a business plan to provide clarity and guarantee that the idea is realistically thought-out. Moreover, it serves as one of the most popular and established means to impress a potential investor.

4. Business Plan

4.1. Executive Summary

A Syrian Dream is a social business restaurant with primarily the mission to empower older Syrian refugee women. Since there currently exists a lack of frequent tailor-made empowerment initiatives by the government, the restaurant serves as a prime example to highlight the necessity to provide empowerment for this target group.

By using organic and mostly locally grown products, the restaurant provides a combination of excellent Syrian food at value pricing, including a 10% donation on every meal towards the development of other empowerment projects. Of the 9 workers employed, 8 of them will be Syrian refugee women above their 40s, for whom it is generally difficult to find suitable work in Germany. These women will be encouraged to cook and help managing the day to day operating business.

In a growing, hip and highly multicultural metropole such as Berlin with nearly 5000 restaurants, competition is high and hence it is getting more and more difficult to differentiate one restaurant

from another. Nevertheless, with growing single household constellations, increasing working hours, a growing purchasing power and increasing tourists, the restaurant segment is on the rise. Currently, there are only a few restaurants whose workers are solely refugees and there is none which exclusively employs women. On top of that, there is no known concept which donates a specific amount of its revenues towards a social cause.

Based on the size of the market and assumptions, 35 customers/h within the second year are predicted (including external delivery service and take-away), which on average each spend around 7€. Being open 12 hours and 26 days a month, monthly revenues will amount to approximately 75k a month. By deducting the cost of goods sold and other expenses such as salaries, rent, insurances and others, there will be a monthly net profit of around 2k/months in the second year. Since an initial investment of around 84k within the first year is needed to fund this business, it is assumed that part of the money may be raised via crowdfunding platforms as well as qualifying for grants offered by the government.

4.2. Organization's Structure & Objectives

The restaurant clearly positions itself as a non-profit business whose surpluses are firstly used to maintain its mission and secondly to contribute to various programmes, which are specifically designed towards actively supporting refugees in need. By mostly using local ingredients, the restaurant wants to highlight the importance of protecting the environment.

According to a representative study by Nielson in 2015, almost two-thirds (66%) of consumers are willing to pay extra for products and services that come from companies who are committed to positive social and environmental impact. Among those, over 50% are influenced by key sustainability factors, such as a product being made from fresh, natural and/or organic ingredients (69%), a company being environmentally friendly (58%), and a company being known for its commitment to social value (56%) (Nielson, 2015). Hence, it is believed that if communicated properly, customers will be willing to spend more at *A Syrian Dream*.

Given the fact that it is more difficult for older refugee women to find employment in Germany (BMFSFJ, 2017), this restaurant tackles this issue by providing a flexible workplace, in which only limited language skills are required and former gastronomy knowledge is a plus, however not a necessity. Moreover, by working in a familiar environment with people sharing the same background, these women are slowly given the opportunity to accommodate, yet feel protected.

By exposing them to customers from Germany as well as tourists from all over the world, these women are encouraged to communicate and give as well as receive positive energy.

4.3. PESTLE Analysis

Today's organizations are faced with an external environment that is changing faster than ever before. Therefore, it might be useful for them to investigate and analyse their surrounding by using the PESTLE framework which helps discussing each factor's implication on the business including possible opportunities.

Political

Recent election outcomes and the compartmentalization of many governments within the European Union and beyond are present issues and represent crucial debates within the political agenda.

Whereas in 2015 “only” 40% of the population in Germany demanded no new refugees should enter Germany, this year almost 60% of the population feel this way (Zeit, 2017). This attitude is also represented by the very recent elections in September 2017, in which the national right-wing party “Alternative für Deutschland” (AFD) gained more than 12% and is now – for the first time in German history – represented in the German Bundestag (Welt, 2017). Of course, it is wrong to assume all people who have voted for this party do not welcome refugees, but there is a strong causal link (Sueddeutsche, 2017). Since many Germans fear a lack of integration and no working opportunities for refugees (Meisner, 2015), *A Syrian Dream* could help in bringing about an improved view on this debate by not only integrating refugees but also by connecting them with the German population so that this may positively affect the political atmosphere in regard to accepting and welcoming refugees.

Economical

Economically, there is no universal agreement upon the question in how far refugees are beneficial for the German economy. However, there is universal agreement upon the slowly rising strength of the German economy in general (Handelsblatt, 2017). Since 2015 there have been economic growth rates of approximately 1-2% (Welt, 2017).

Although refugees in general cost Germany around 28€ billion annually (Zeit, 2017), there are several scenarios predicting a positive impact upon the economy caused by the refugee influx. Within these positive scenarios however, scholars agree that it is compulsory to beforehand spend vast resources – especially financially – to guarantee a certain standard of qualification as

a necessity. Only if the government agrees upon the importance of providing suitable means to support the integration as well as education of refugees, an adequate and successful inclusion may happen.

The restaurant segment is very dependent on a stable economy since it is not a commodity. As long as there will not be a recession, *A Syrian Dream* can highly profit from current economic growth.

Social

Socially, it might be interesting to look at lifestyle factors which irresistibly affect the restaurant segment. First of all, there is increasing concern in health consciousness and the body, resulting in a shift towards healthier food habits (Forbes, 2015). Especially in Berlin many people value a restaurant's healthy ingredients and pay attention on how healthy the food they are consuming is. Moreover, since globalization is constantly growing, people become more and more open towards eating exotic and in particular Arabic cuisines (RP Online, 2017). On top of that, we currently experience a shift from owning towards experiencing, in which consumers prefer experiences and shared time with their loved ones instead of increasingly owning material products. People spend more time on social media and enjoy posting what they have experienced throughout the day. Especially the phenomenon of "food blogging" has gained significant relevance in our society and is directly affecting restaurant businesses. If *A Syrian Dream* manages to position itself as cool and hip restaurant that provides its guests with healthy food and experiences worth sharing, it can strongly benefit from these lifestyle trends.

Technological

Although generally speaking the restaurant industry has been a low-technology industry, there has recently been a shift towards increasing technological advancements. For instance, many fast food chains have implemented big screens into their restaurants to show their menu or marketing. Additionally, there is a trend towards increasing self-service and less employee interaction with the customer.

Moreover, restaurants have increasingly sensed the opportunities Social Media is offering them. Creatively engaging customers in relevant channels such as Facebook or Instagram has become routine. Moreover, nowadays many restaurants own a website in which online bookings are possible and general information is displayed. The reputation of a restaurant can be monitored on websites such as Yelp or Zomato, which bundle critiques of customers.

On top of that, there is a trend within Berlin to make delivery for restaurants possible that typically do not offer delivery services. The customer can book a meal on a universal website (Deliveroo or Foodora) that has an agreement with the restaurant and the meal will be delivered on a bike. Many restaurants have profited from that and *A Syrian Dream* can participate easily, without paying a fee since the customer is covering these.

Legal

It is useful to shed light on current legal obligations in regard to working permits that this business needs to comply with as well as current tax provisions.

Although on average asylum procedures take around 7 months in Germany (Bundesregierung, 2017), Syrian refugees “only” wait around 3 months until their status is determined (ibid). While waiting for the asylum procedure to be closed, no non-restrictive work (comparable to normal residents) can be performed (BAMF, 2017). Nevertheless, there are still opportunities applicants can make use of, in which the asylum seeker receives a symbolical salary – next to the standardized financial help received by the government. For asylum seekers who got their asylum granted (typically for 3 years for the time being), it is allowed for them to perform any type of work. In 2015, more than 99% of the Syrian refugees entering Germany got their asylum granted (Proasyl, 2016). This means, there is no legal restriction on the working status of *A Syrian Dream*’s future employees.

However, as in any other business, it is of crucial importance to deal with the subject of tax policies. While looking at the past 50 years, German taxes have generally risen (Bundesfinanzministerium, 2016). The OECD (2017) has furthermore found that - after Belgium - German workers pay most taxes within the European Union. Hence, it is necessary to receive financial incentives sponsored by the government to be able to sustain the business, especially in the beginning of the restaurant’s operations.

Environmental

Germany is currently the forerunner and prime example for an energy revolution that scientists say all nations must one day complete if a climate disaster is to be averted. Last year about “27 percent of its electricity came from renewable sources such as wind and solar power, three times what it got a decade ago and more than twice what the United States gets today.” (Kunzig, 2015). This environmental friendly mindset is not only reflected in German policies but also by its inhabitants, which increasingly consume products that do not harm the environment. These

people are willing to pay a premium price for products and services. Hence, it is probably of no surprise that Berlin represents the city with most consumers who care about good and healthy products (BMEL, 2016). Due to this, *A Syrian Dream* strongly benefits from consumers who value good and healthy products offered.

4.4. SWOT Analysis

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Product/ Service Offering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural & healthy ingredients • Authentic food • Impact related 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pricier than competition • Limited offering • No breakfast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible products that are easy to change • First mover advantage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too specialized • People/customers might not care
Brand/ Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially & environmentally concerned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idea is not timeless • Exposed to criticism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness on many issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly political & controversial • Extreme idea
Staff/HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of traditional cuisine • Employees share same background 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language & cultural barrier • Difficulty in attaining employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural environment with many influences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee turnover • Cultural differences • Many women
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-defined budgeting plan • Good access to financial resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly dependent on external funds • High investment needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various sponsorships available • Financial back-up from government possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bankruptcy due to external funding dependency • Miscalculation
Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing demand within that sector • Growing refugee influx 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very specialized • Very recent • Unpredictable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime example for issues addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimistic estimation • Unforeseen changes in the market

4.5. Market Research & Problem Identification

Although more than 60 mln people worldwide are on the run (UNO, 2017), only 6% of those make it to Europe and 2% of these are women (ibid). Their experiences and needs are very different from those of men. Examples of differences are gender-specific traumas, responsibility for accompanying children or a traditional understanding of roles. These factors can limit mobility, participation in education and finding employment. However, just like male refugees, female refugees are highly motivated to participate in German society (Zeit, 2017). Yet, they tend to have fewer educational qualifications and more frequently completely lack any form of

schooling or vocational training (BAMF, 2017, p. 8). On average, they also tend to have significantly less experience regarding paid labour in their countries of origin (ibid).

According to a recent German nation-wide study on female refugees, a total of 639 refugee women in five federal states were recruited and interviewed. Of these 639 women, 252 (39%) were from Berlin and as expected, the largest group consisted of Syrian women (Charité, 2017, p. 19). More than 50% of the women interviewed were older than 30 years. Among those, many indicated a low degree of German language skills and almost every 5th woman did not own a degree at the time being. Furthermore, 30% indicated to have never worked before and many of those who have worked, were primarily engaged in a rather low-skilled industry (ibid, p. 21).

However, stability in life (35%) and options for work and study (38%) were one of the main wishes raised by these women, even if these were never employed before. On top of that, more than 20% indicated a general aspiration of self-development and a wish for general empowerment (p. 33).

Nevertheless, not all women wish to become integrated in the German labour market. Although a significant number of Syrian women shows the desire for integration into the German labour market, there are still women who simply do not share the desire to become independent according to our Western beliefs. Regardless of what reasons a woman might have to not become integrated into the German labour market, these wishes should be strongly respected. For all others wishing to participate in the German labour force or simply for those who want to receive an opportunity to become engaged and empowered, unfortunately there currently exists a shortage of suitable offers.

The EOCD noted (2017), that one key challenge for governments to provide suitable measures for those wishing to become empowered is the “high diversity in qualification levels among recent arrivals, requiring tailor-made approaches” (p.13). For instance, many older Syrian women who have entered Germany and applied for asylum, do neither possess academic qualification nor relevant work experience as already established before. However, a prerequisite for most jobs on the job market is a certain language proficiency which most of them do not possess. Hence, specific programmes for low-skilled workers are necessary.

With its special integration measures for refugees (FIM) put into place in 2016, the German federal government has created opportunities for all refugees involved in asylum proceedings to

work with municipalities and local authorities and with national or charitable service providers. Refugees can familiarize themselves with the German labour market and can carry out work while their asylum procedure is in progress. It provides low-threshold work opportunities for up to 100 000 asylum seekers and is only symbolically paid. However, it is being criticized because it only targets refugees waiting for their asylum procedure to be defined (yet nowadays, the asylum procedure is being dealt with comparably fast with very good chances to remain for refugees stemming from Syria). Also, many of these opportunities are of internal nature, meaning, the employment opportunity is created within the current living surrounding of the refugee (for instance within the own accommodation). This way people involved in that measure are only empowered to a limited degree since they are not confronted with new surroundings and situations. Besides, it does not specify any tailor-made opportunities for women. It can thus be said, these measures neglect the fact that some women do not want to work with their male counterparts (IWD, 2017). From 2018 onwards, this incentive is being cut down immensely due to reaching insufficient candidates.

From beginning of 2018, an improved version of another measure designed by the German government – the so called “Concept for Orientation for Low-Threshold Courses on the Integration of Foreign Women” - has been further developed which specifically stresses the importance of providing measures exclusively for women. The courses provided address foreign women who have been just coming or/and living in Germany for some time. More specifically, they are intended to appeal to women who have been difficult to reach with the nationwide promotion of integration. This applies especially to education-poor women. The courses have a classic empowerment mechanism, by taking the competences of the participants, making these competences visible and developing them further. They help the participants to see their strengths, to become more self-confident and increasingly independent. The courses aim at throwing light on existing possibilities in regard to finding a suitable workplace or place to become independent and feel needed (BAMF, 2017, p. 2). Although the course content and the general purpose of these courses is viewed very positively (BAMF, 2016), many women above 45 years are not specifically educated on how to use their empowerment in order to perform any type of work: The course content divides women under and above 45 years and the latter group is barely confronted with possibilities to engage into working or volunteering (ibid).

Another important and wide-spread initiative is the “Stark im Beruf - Mütter mit Migrationshintergrund” measure that also specifically addresses women. There, women who participate receive relevant information for the job market, coaching and general education. However, it generally addresses any woman who immigrated and thus does not take into account important and sensitive war and escape-related topics to find tailor-made approaches for women fleeing war and poverty (Bafza, 2017). Moreover, it rather addresses younger women and does not officially provide course contents for older women.

Certain other initiatives that are of more direct character aim at providing 6-12 months internship possibilities as opportunity to be able to eventually gain foothold in a company by receiving a contract for an apprenticeship. In this case however, this measure is once again more suitable for women who will most likely remain within the company for many years in order to add economic value.

Although all named initiatives are a first starting point to empower women in general, it only prepares them, but actually rarely provides executing incentives. On top, it seems as if most of these measures are also of profitable nature since it is commonly agreed upon that older women might not yield as much value to an economy compared to a young woman who has the possibility to be educated properly and work many years full-time. Hence, something more direct is needed that includes and specifically takes into account those older women willing to actively participate in the German labour market. There should exist tailor-made approaches that give them the opportunity to make use of their time and skills.

4.5.1. Why Restaurant Segment?

The choice to enter the gastronomy segment has been driven by the fact that the so called “eating-out” phenomenon is steadily increasing within the German culture. Within the last 10 years, revenues in the gastronomy industry have been constantly growing, currently reaching a total revenue of about 52€ bln annually (Statista, 2017). Moreover, the trend to work more hours is growing as well, meaning an increasing amount of people will most likely have less time to spend on cooking food at home. Nowadays an average person spends around 5h cooking weekly, whereas the time spent for cooking has been way more years ago (BMEL, 2016). Moreover, an article suggests, Berlin is the city, in which its inhabitants cook the least (Tagesspiegel, 2017). On top of that it can be argued that there is a general shift from the traditional family concept as our parents used to know and experience it towards increasing household constellations, in which

single person households are common: Whereas in 1985, there have been approximately 25% of single households in whole Germany, in 2016 there have been already 41% of single households, with a forecast to rise steadily (Welt, 2017). Coupled with the trend to work more hours (BMEL, 2016), there now remains less time to spend on household related things such as cooking. Due to these trends and developments, it is highly believed there is constantly growing demand for the restaurant industry, especially in big cities such as Berlin.

Moreover, the restaurant segment does not necessarily require HR qualifications by law and is able to depict the cultural values of the people who are associated with the business.

4.6. Competitor Analysis

Direct competition does not exist in the sense that mainly Syrian women work in a gastronomical business. However, there are certain snack bars/restaurants within the city centre in Berlin in which Syrian refugees are the centre of workforce.

1. LAWRENCE – “*Make Orders, Not Borders*” – Competitor A

This hip and trendy cultural space with integrated restaurant, café and gallery has positioned itself as melting pot with German workers as well as Syrian refugee workers who together mix all their existing talent to make use of a concept of non-barriers. This is reflected by the choice of menu that mainly serves middle-eastern food but also offers German and international delicacies. It is located central and tourists are a big customer base.

2. DAMASKUS – “*Baklava without Borders, from Homs with Love*” – Competitor B

Damaskus is a local family-owned pastry shop that has specialized itself in baking Syrian baklava. They offer around 25 types of baklava, each of them freshly prepared in the morning. The owners are refugees and stem from Homs. They are very concerned with quality and highly motivated. This is reflected by their ambition to soon start opening a small factory in which they can expand their existing baking business and export their pastries in order to reach more customers. At the moment, the pastry shop in the heart of Neukölln mainly serves German locals who live nearby and enjoy the freshly produced sweet pastries.

3. Shaam: “*Shawarma like in Damaskus*” – Competitor C

Probably the nearest competition to restaurant *A Syrian Dream* is the Shaam, which is operated exclusively by Syrian refugees. It provides customers (mainly locals and other migrants) the possibility to either sit down and enjoy the food served or simply to take it home. The easy and

traditional snacks and food from Damascus are simple yet healthy and are produced exclusively by refugee workers.

Please consult Appendix 1 for graphical competitor analysis.

4.7. Customer Value Proposition

“For people who are interested in new delicious, culinary experiences in a multicultural Berlin and who care about their environment, A Syrian Dream provides them with healthy and organic middle-eastern food directly prepared by Syrian refugee women. By eating at A Syrian Dream, customers become part of directly helping to empower our female refugees and additionally donate 10% of every meal towards refugee incentives.

Regardless if you are a local, tourist, influencer or a lost soul – here idealists find a space in which they can help creating a better future for those in need.”

4.7.1. Positioning

It is key for any business to plan a positioning which will give their product or service the greatest advantage in the selected target market. In case of *A Syrian Dream* it makes sense to base its positioning above all on the aspects of psychological benefits and quality. Psychological benefits are important to give customers the opportunity to help creating impact and be part of something innovative and integral. While eating at *A Syrian Dream*, an experience is created that gives the customer a better feeling about himself/herself. Customers should get the feeling to be an important player in fostering integration and empowerment mechanisms while simultaneously tackling climate change issues. Moreover, since striving for quality is increasing and more customers do care from where the products they eat stem, the restaurant should constantly stress the point of using above average quality products. Although quality positioning (due to fresh, mostly seasonal products) is very important in helping to acquire customers that care about the environment, the focus however is put on the creation of impact and the role the customer is playing in reaching measurable impact (further explained in the “Price” Section). *A Syrian Dream* should implement mechanisms that make it easy for a customer to track down the specific impact he/she has contributed. How to specifically reach that objective, the following sections will demonstrate.

4.8. Product Mix

4.8.1. Product

For Syrians, food is a very important part of their national identity. Its cuisine has evolved over thousands of years of conquests, trading and migrations (The Guardian, 2016). The Syrian table is hence an expression of a multicultural country and a way of living together with different nationalities and ethnicities.

The variety of the menu is ought to be kept as simple as possible (see Table 2 + 3 in Appendix) to maximize efficiency and prevent food waste. Since the restaurants' opening hours are from 11am-11pm, no breakfast options will be offered. Instead, there will be a mix of hot and cold dishes to eat throughout the day – including take away options with biodegradable packaging. As already mentioned, the focus of the ingredients will mainly be kept local and organic. Nowadays, there are several options to receive local and organic products around Berlin, and in general throughout all Germany. In 2016, the revenue for organic products within Germany has been 9.48€ billion, which represents an 10% increase compared to the previous year (Foodwatch, 2017). Now, the number of organic farms in Germany nearly counts 30.000 (ibid).

While considering potential suppliers, there are many options available. On the one site there are big wholesale markets who are specialized in selling organic products such as *Landlinie*, *Terra Natur* or *Bio Corner* among others. Although prices are comparably low, most of these big markets almost always operate on a non-local level and hence their supply chain is not as green. Therefore, it makes more sense to build partnerships with more local farms around Berlin - preferable in Brandenburg or Mecklenburg-Vorpommern - who are able to provide the necessary amounts requested and who are environmentally friendly. There currently exists a distributor who bundles 32 different producers around Berlin and is hence able to offer around 100 different local products on a daily basis. They attach importance to be environmentally responsible and even claim to sell below organic market prices. Moreover, they also claim to be open for lasting and ongoing relationships.

As another alternative, it might be attractive to consider “benefitting” from the problem of food waste, which represents a huge issue within our society. Currently, it is estimated that approximately one third of the food produced globally is eventually wasted, which amounts to 1.3 billion tons of food per year (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2015, p. 4). Unfortunately, there is no strong developed market for effectively making use

of/preventing wood waste and hence it is difficult to obtain ingredients from organizations who specialize in reducing food waste. In Germany, there currently exist only a handful of supermarkets who sell so called “misfit” groceries (DW, 2017). Nevertheless, it is believed that the market for such products will rise rapidly within the next years.

4.8.2. Price

In general, prices will most likely exceed *A Syrian Dream*’s competitors since organic and mostly local product prices are comparably higher than the products currently used in the average gastronomy/fast food segment.

Although prices are sensitive within the typical fast food segment, there is a certain tendency within Berlin in which moral decisions may overcome price sensitivity (Tagesspiegel, 2016). This is for instance the case for Cause-Related Marketing that has boomed in recent years throughout major Western cities (The Balance, 2017). Although there are many versions of Cause-Related Marketing, all of these aim at raising money or awareness on a particular cause. It is not an anonymous donation but one that lets the customer know for what he/she has indirectly donated. In the case of product sales, businesses decide to sell their products while a portion of the selling price is going to a beforehand defined social cause.

In the case of *A Syrian Dream*, it will be agreed that 10% of the revenues from selling the meals will be retained and accumulated to assist projects financially that specifically address issues that refugee women might encounter. Since the Integration Commissioner in Berlin is currently planning to put in place some initiatives that have the sole aim to empower women (provide language courses, provide space where meetings can be held, etc.), these projects currently actively search for financial donations. Within the restaurant’s website, each month the value of these donations should be published so that customers might track its development and monitor, in how far they have been responsible for helping financially and thus creating impact.

4.8.3. Place

Of course, the right location is a crucial factor for a restaurant’s success (The Balance, 2016). In the case of Berlin, the city is vibrant and highly multicultural: 51% of its inhabitants have not been born in Berlin and within the inner-city centre it is only every third person (Tagesspiegel, 2015). The number of overnight stays has been on the rise for years, growing more than almost any other metropolis. In 2016 it grew to more than 31 million – a record (Business Location

Center, 2017). Berlin has slowly established itself among the top three travel destinations in Europe and represents the most popular city travel destination in Germany. The relatively low price-level favours this development: Berlin is regarded to be an affordable world city with lots of cultural and historical value and influences (ibid).

When looking within Berlin, important attributes to consider are the size of the commercial venue, its visibility and reachability. It is key to make sure that there are enough people living nearby that have been targeted. In the case of *A Syrian Dream*, the clientele is assumed to be rather young and dynamic. Although some of them might visit the restaurant spontaneously, it is assumed that customers will want to return and incorporate their food habits within the restaurant. They might drop by at *A Syrian Dream* on the way home after work or they might squeeze in a short lunch/dinner date with a work colleague or friend. Regardless of how and why they will come to *A Syrian Dream*, it needs to be located centrally. In fact, districts such as Kreuzberg, Neukölln or Prenzlauer Berg are hotspots for young residents as well as tourists who are open for hip locations to eat out (Focus, 2016). However, these districts are unfortunately the ones that are most expensive when it comes to commercial rent prices. Currently, some locations may ask for up to 330€/m² (IHK Berlin, 2016). Hence, trade-offs are necessary and alternative districts should be taken into consideration as well. As a promising alternative, districts on the rise such as Wedding or Tempelhof are therefore highly promising since – after some research – current commercial rent prices within good locations of these districts range between approximately 15€/m² to 50€/m². Since the restaurant is thought to be kept rather small (approximately 60m²), it is realistically possible to be able to afford such rent prices.

4.8.4. Promotion

A strong promotion plan is essential for *A Syrian Dream* to communicate with future customers. In the beginning, while starting from scratch, a thought-out promotion strategy can decide for a venue to acquire and attract first valuable customers. First of all, it is of vital importance to become present in the main social media channels. Self-created advertising through channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter has the ability to reach targeted customers cheap and rapidly. While using these methods, it is important to tell a story and engage the user. For instance, it might be very helpful to introduce the employees with a short bibliography including aspirations, dreams and hopes. This may naturally stress the fact that these people have a story to tell which wants to be shared and listen to.

Moreover, it is useful to contact and inquire major local magazines such as BZ, Berliner Kurier and other smaller district-local newspapers to incorporate a small article on the opening and existence of *A Syrian Dream*. Since some might regard refugee-related issues as controversial and given the fact that it will be the first restaurant who is mainly operated by older Syrian refugee women, there is no doubt publicity will lack. It is assumed that people will be very curious about the idea and it might even sparkle a controversial debate.

4.9. Operational Plan

A Syrian Dream will operate 6 days a week (excluding Mondays) from 11am to 11pm. The restaurant will have 6 refugee people working in the kitchen (3 workers each 8h shift). Each shift one of them will be parallelly responsible for safeguarding a clean environment. Furthermore, in each shift one additional worker will be the cashier. Also, there will be one manager safeguarding a smooth operating process. Hence, in total, the restaurant will employ 9 workers. The restaurant's size will be approximately 60m², with ca. 15-20m² kitchen and storage and ca. 40-45m² dining area. Given these numbers, it is estimated that the restaurant itself may host up to around 40 people.

It is assumed that there will be 35 people/h (on average) in the second year of operations and that these will spend around 7€ each. Within these 35 guests/h, it is assumed that approximately 5-10 guests/h will make use of a delivery service or take-away options and the remaining 25-30 guests/h will dine within the restaurant's facilities.

4.9.1. Quality control

Especially in the restaurant segment it is very important to safeguard and maintain a high degree of quality in every aspect of the business. Not only the product is key within this segment, but also its employees and the whole environment within the facility.

1.) Food

As already touched upon in the product section within the Product Mix, the product's origins will stem from regional suppliers who produce organically and local. These suppliers are approved by the organic seal of quality which has been established by the European Union Directive on organic products.

In order to be able to guarantee fresh products within the restaurant, continuous check lists are key. These checklists should monitor right temperature levels and the general condition of the

products. To ensure that meals are consistent, the employees are encouraged to stick to beforehand specified ingredients and amounts.

2.) Kitchen & Dining Area

Working in a kitchen demands standards for cleanness. It needs to be specified which kitchen items need to be cleaned throughout every cooking shift and which items demand a thorough cleaning after each shift and close of business. Moreover, there should be frequent general cleanings which are more profound. Within the dining area, broad everyday cleaning should be assured after each operating day. On top of that, there will be professional cleaning conducted by an external agency who will come once a week to do profound cleaning.

3.) Staff Training

In order to turn great products into great food, relevant cooking skills are of high importance. Since prior working experience in the cooking sector is not a necessity for this business, trainings are very important. There currently exists an initiative which specializes itself in connecting refugees and residents by hosting cooking events. Parallely, they offer free cooking classes for refugees. Alternatively, there have been initiatives in the past, in which famous chefs gave classes to refugees. Also, just recently a Syrian refugee has been announced to become chef in the noble Berlin restaurant Wolff & Eber. Famous chef's could help selecting the menu to ensure a high quality final product. Moreover, since success is defined on a team level, frequent team meetings are necessary.

4.10. Budget and Financials

Opening a business with nearly no own capital is very hard and risky. Moreover, opening a business without being able to present major experience only increases that risk. Since non-existing own capital and not enough relevant experience is given in this case, bank support is almost impossible (The Balance, 2016). Fortunately, there are many alternatives today that make it possible for a young entrepreneur to realize his/her project without the financial support of banks. Especially when it comes to social, non-profit businesses, the spectrum is highly diversified. Since this type of business is aimed at educating and empowering female refugees, there exist possibilities to receive funds by the government. More specifically, there is a project sponsorship by the German Ministry for Migration and Refugees which specifically aims at facilitating integration measures to bring about inclusion and acceptance (BAMF, 2016). This project addresses (social-) businesses with a maximum grant amount of 50.000 € per year.

By looking at private measures to receive financial support, there is a Crowdfunding platform called “Zusammen für Flüchtlinge” specifically designed to fund projects and businesses that exclusively deal with refugees. This platform has been initiated by betterplace.org, Germany’s biggest social donation platform. Up to now, the “Zusammen für Flüchtlinge” crowdfunding platform has helped generating almost 7€ mln for more than 600 projects (Zusammen für Flüchtlinge, 2017). Since the platform is supported by the German Federal Ministry of Interior, there are no transaction costs.

Considering that, it is believed that during the first year, 50k will be granted by the government and around 35k will be granted by crowdfunding platforms and other donations.

For a detailed financial plan, please consult the attached Excel.

5. Conclusion

Although the government and various scholars are steadily working on coping with the recent refugee crisis within Germany in regard to integration and empowerment, this working paper has shown that although many efforts represent an approach towards improvement, they unfortunately do not seem to be efficient enough. This is reflected by the findings which detect that although many initiatives are a first starting point to empower women in general, it mainly prepares or educates them, but actually rarely provides executing incentives. This is however of vital importance to not only benefit society and the government, but especially to offer dignity and a perspective to those who currently face hard times.

In this context, the concept of Social Entrepreneurship has increasingly gained significance as well as recognition within the last decades to assist government’s on improving an existing social problem and raise awareness.

Hence, by developing a thought-out business plan, an individual proposal for improvement has been designed which aims to raise awareness on the issue of vulnerable refugees as well as provide them with basic empowering mechanisms to make them feel valued and engaged.

Although it is obvious this project will certainly not change the world, it however illustrates a path within a circumstantial process that requires active engagement and empathy of all people involved in order to bring about peace and equal prosperity for all.

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7. Appendix

Table 1 – Competitor Analysis

For each factor listed in the first column, it is assessed whether it is believed to represent a strength or a weakness (S or W) for the business and for the competitors. The following columns rank the importance to the target customer (1 = very important; 5 = not very important).

FACTO	Me	Competitor A	Competitor B	Competitor C	Importance to Customer
Products	S	S	W	W	1
Price	W	W	S	S	1
Quality	S	W	S	W	2
Location	S	S	W	S	3

As an outcome, although all restaurants score relatively well and are quite similar on most of the matters, this comparison gives an indication or rather proves that *A Syrian Dream* has the possibility to become lucrative as well.

Table 2 – Menu Draft (p. 1)

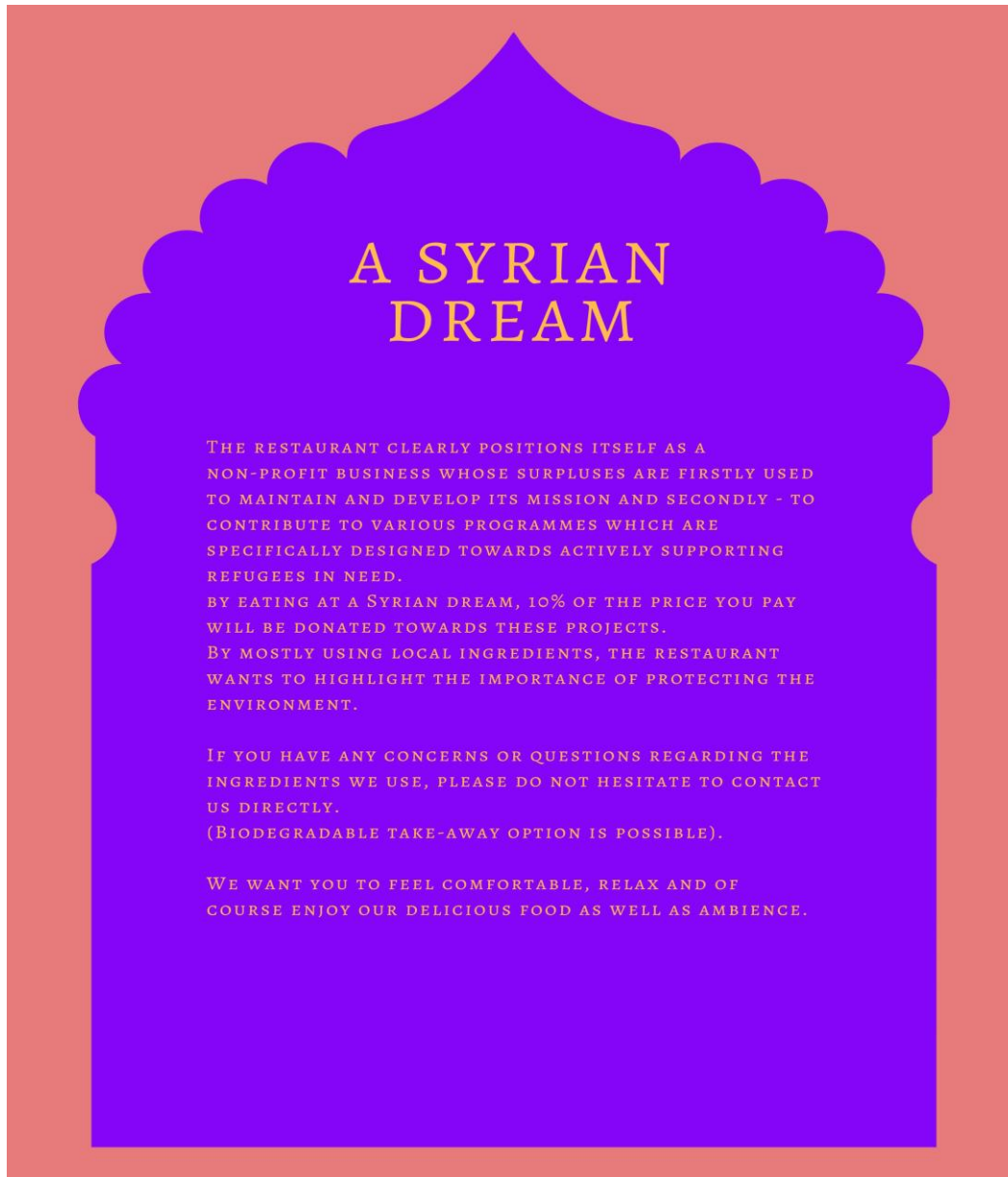


Table 3 – Menu Draft (p. 2)

M E N U
COLD DISHES
TABOULEH SALAD
SPICY HUMMUS WITH LEMON & PITA BREAD
PLAIN BABA GANOUSH WITH YOGHURT
TRADITIONAL MUHAMMARA WITH WALNUTS
MIXED DIP PLATE
HOT DISHES
FRESH LENTIL SOUP WITH LOCAL HERBS
FALAFEL IN BREAD WITH SEASONAL VEGETABLES
HALLOUMI IN BREAD WITH SEASONAL VEGETABLES
SPICED POTATOES (BATATA HARRA) WITH CILANTRO
MUJADARA LENTILS WITH CARAMELIZED ONIONS
MIXED PLATE WITH A BIT OF EVERYTHING
BEVERAGES
HOT BLACK TEA
HOT MINT TEA
SEVERAL COFFEE SPECIALITIES
COKE, FANTA, SPRITE
STILL & SPARKLING WATER
SELFMADE ICE COLD TEA
SELFMADE AYRAN YOGHURT DRINK